

# Cemetery at Arrow Close

*Information booklet 2023*

MIDDLETON CHENEY  
Parish Council



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## **1. General Information**

The Cemetery at Arrow Close has been an asset of Middleton Cheney Parish Council since 1923 and has provided a burial place for the residents of Middleton Cheney.

The Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of the Cemetery. We are committed to improving the Cemetery and ensuring that it is a well-maintained and suitable resting place for loved ones.

### **1.1 General Enquiries**

In the first instance, all enquiries should be made to Middleton Cheney Parish Council at the Parish Meeting Rooms, Main Road, Middleton Cheney, OX17 2LR, Tel 01295 713500.

Detailed plans and registers are kept in the Council office and information may be sought during office opening hours (please check the website for latest update of office hours).

### **1.2 Change of Address**

It is very helpful when trying to contact the owner of plots/memorials that current addresses are available to the Council. If you change address, please advise the Council without delay.

### **1.3 Service Standards**

The Council would value any comments you may have which could assist us to improve our service in the future.

### **1.4 Currency of information**

All information within this document is correct at the time of printing. Changing legislation and circumstances may, however, cause future revisions to be made and these will be binding on all Deed holders.

## **2. Cemetery at Arrow Close Site Information**

### **2.1 Location**

The cemetery is located at Arrow Close, Middleton Cheney, OX17 2QJ

### **2.2 Opening Times**

The cemetery is open to the public daily from dawn to dusk, with access through the main gates. The Council reserves the right to close the grounds and limit entry at any time.

### **2.3 Toilets**

There are no toilet facilities at the Cemetery.

### **2.4 Dogs**

Dogs **MUST** be kept on a lead and under control all times and owners are required to clear up after their dogs.

### **2.5 Watering**

Water points are provided for visitors use. This water is unsuitable for drinking. The addition of pesticides or insecticides to the water, or their use within the cemetery, is forbidden. Please also note that at certain times water supplies may be turned off to avoid freezing, this is normally between October and March but this may change depending on weather conditions.

### **2.6 Memorial Seats**

The placement and style of seats is restricted and they may only be placed in certain locations in the cemetery. Please contact the Parish Council office to discuss options.

### **2.7 Security**

The Council cannot accept responsibility for the security of any memorials, plants, flowers or other items placed on or around graves or memorial seats.

## 2.8 Children

Families with children are most welcome to visit the cemetery, but children **MUST** be kept under close supervision at all times.

## 2.9 Cemetery Gates

The cemetery is fitted with gates which are to be kept closed, we ask that you kindly close the gates as you leave.

## 2.10 Code of Conduct

Whilst visiting the cemetery please:

- be aware that funerals may be taking place within the cemetery
- treat other people in the cemetery with the utmost respect
- treat the cemetery, graves and memorials with respect

Whilst visiting the cemetery, please **DO NOT**:

- behave in a noisy, disorderly, or indecent manner, be intoxicated or drink alcohol, play any game, or use any abusive language, damage or destroy any tree, shrub, plant, headstone, memorial vase, plaque, seat or any other property within the cemetery
- ride a bicycle, motorbike or drive any motor vehicle other than those authorised by the Council or which is attending funerals
- obstruct any officer or any other person employed by the Council in the execution of their duties.

# 3. The Burial Process

## 3.1 Exclusive Right of Burial

An Exclusive Right of Burial (known as the Deed) **MUST** be purchased for a period of 75 years, at the time of submitting a notice for an interment. Burial spaces may be purchased either by residents or non-residents of Middleton Cheney, but please note that non-residents of Middleton Cheney will be subject to higher charges.

After the 75 year period the Exclusive Right of Burial may be renewed by the then owner of the right, for which a renewal fee will be payable and the new grant will be subject to the burial regulations then in place. The council will buy back any unused deeds at purchase price only.

For the purposes of this document, "Resident of Middleton Cheney" is defined as a person living in the civil parish of Middleton Cheney at the time of death, or a person who has lived in the civil parish of Middleton within the last five years.

There may be other circumstances in which a person might be deemed a resident of Middleton Cheney, but these are exceptional and each such application in this respect will be considered on its merits by the Parish Council.

The selection of grave spaces shall be determined by the Council which will, where possible, take into consideration the purchasers' wishes.

## 3.2 Interments

Prior booking is required for every interment and this **MUST** be confirmed in writing on the Notice of Interment. A Notice of Interment **MUST** be given using the Council's printed form and must be completed in full.

Responsibility for any errors or omissions rests with the person submitting the Notice. The Notice of Interment must be received by the Council at least three clear working days before the date of interment, unless for religious reasons and agreed with the Middleton Cheney Parish Council office. All charges and fees connected with the interment shall accompany the Notice of Interment and cheques should be made payable to "Middleton Cheney Parish Council".

Failure to complete the Notice of Interment correctly or within the time specified may lead to a delay in interment and an increase in fees payable. Please note, for burial interments it may be necessary to temporarily store soil on adjoining graves.

### 3.3 Certificate for Burial or Cremation

The Certificate for Burial or Cremation, issued by the Registrar of Births and Deaths, MUST accompany the burial cortège and will be inspected at the cemetery upon arrival. Burials and cremations cannot take place without such certificates.

### 3.4 Existing Plot

Where the interment involves re-opening an existing plot, it will be necessary for the person giving notice to produce the Exclusive Right of Burial. Where the name on the Deed differs from the name of the person giving notice, proof of ownership will be required. Contact Middleton Cheney Parish Council office for advice and help regarding this subject.

The removal of any headstone, vase or table from a purchased plot to permit the interment shall be carried out to the order of and at the risk and expense of the person requesting the burial. This MUST be carried out in good and sufficient time for the grave to be opened.

The memorial and its foundations should be removed from the cemetery in its entirety during this time.

Headstones, vases or tablets removed to permit grave re-opening shall be replaced by a competent stone mason, and at the risk and expense of the Deed owner 9 months after the interment has taken place.

### 3.5 Plot care in advance of burial

In the event of poor ground conditions (e.g. flooding or subsidence), it may be necessary in the interests of health and safety to delay the interment into a plot until after the funeral cortège have left the cemetery. Should this be the case, every effort will be made to notify the Funeral Directors in advance but, if advance notice is not possible, notification will be given to the funeral cortège on its arrival at the cemetery.

### 3.6 Plot care immediately following burial

Back-filling of plot will not normally begin until funeral cortège are making their way out of the cemetery. Plots are then left slightly mounded to allow for settlement, and flowers delivered at the time of the burial will be carefully placed on the plot upon completion of back-filling. No memorials may be placed upon the plot within 9 months unless prior written agreement is received from the Council (this does not include the interment of ashes).

### 3.7 Lost Exclusive Right of Burial

Where an Exclusive Right of Burial (Deed) has been mislaid, it will be necessary for the person giving notice of the interment to provide proof of their identity and, if that person is not the Deed owner, to provide a letter of authorisation from the Deed owner.

Where the Deed owner is the deceased, authority for the interment is presumed by Section 10(6) of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977. In such cases, the next-of-kin and other close relatives are advised to agree who should take the assignment (or transfer) of the Exclusive Right of Burial. Contact the Council office for advice and help regarding this subject.

### 3.8 Hours of Interment

Monday to Friday: 09:00 to 14:30

Please be aware that, due to proximity of the cemetery to the secondary school entrance, it is recommended to avoid burials after 14:30.

Weekends/Bank Holidays: by special arrangement only immediate burials are allowed only on the grounds of religion or public health.

### 3.9 Religious Arrangements or Arrangements with the Minister

One section in the cemetery is un-consecrated. Those persons having charge of the funeral and requiring their site to be blessed or consecrated are responsible for making the necessary arrangements.

### 3.10 Funeral Cortèges

Whilst in the cemetery, all funeral cortèges shall be subject to the direction of the Funeral Director. Musicians accompanying a funeral are welcome; however, to ensure disruption is not caused to other visitors, prior consent of the Council will need to be obtained.

### 3.11 Scattering of Ashes

Loose scattering of ashes is not permitted anywhere in the cemetery.

## 4. Plots

### 4.1 Burial Plots

The standard burial plot is 750mm (30") wide and can be dug to either a single or double depth. A standard burial plot can also accommodate up to 6 ashes caskets.

The standard cremation plot is 450mm (18") x 450mm (18") and can be dug to either a single or double depth.

## 5. Memorials

### 5.1 Permission to install memorials

Only qualified Memorial masons are permitted to carry out the installation and/or removal of headstones within the cemetery.

#### 5.2.a Burial Plots

All headstones must have maximum dimensions which should not exceed 2ft 6" (30") in height and 2ft (24") in breadth (3" thickness), with a base not exceeding 2ft 6 (30") x 1ft 3" (15") x 3".

The plinth for the headstone may be placed, to accommodate no more than two flower holders, in front of the headstone if desired.

As long as these parameters are complied with, the design of the headstone can be tailored to personal requirements (please see paragraph 5.3 Memorial Approval). Planting outside of this area is NOT permitted (please see paragraph 6.1 Planting of plots—burial and cremation).

#### 5.2.b Cremation Plots

Plots for ashes can have a maximum dimension of 450mm (18") x 450mm (18"), with a maximum height of 100mm (4"). Memorials must be laid flat (tablet or desk style only). Planting outside of this area is NOT permitted (please see paragraph 6.1 Planting of plots—burial and cremation).

### 5.3 Memorial Approval

No memorial shall be erected anywhere within the cemetery except over a plot for which the Exclusive Right of Burial has been granted.

An application for permission to erect a memorial MUST be made using the Council's Memorial Request Form, and contain a dimensioned drawing or illustration of the proposed memorial and a copy of the proposed inscription. This form should be submitted to the Council and be accompanied by the appropriate fee. No memorial shall be permitted unless written permission has first been obtained from the Council.

A copy of every additional inscription MUST be submitted to the Council for written consent before the work is commenced.

In giving approval for a memorial the Council will consider the safety and suitability of the design and whether it could cause offence.

### 5.4 Plot Aftercare and Memorials

Newly dug burial plots will be top-filled and seeded once the ground has settled (subject to weather and ground conditions). Memorials MUST NOT be placed on a burial plot for the first 9 months following an interment (this does not include the interment of ashes).

#### 5.5 Memorial Masons

Memorial masons are able to give help and advice on the size and type of headstone. Once a suitable memorial has been chosen, the memorial mason will require the plot number and Deed number before details can be submitted to the Council for approval.

The memorial mason MUST contact the Council to arrange an appropriate time, giving one weeks' notice for the memorial to be installed. Memorials must be placed with inscriptions to face East (School playing fields).

#### 5.6 Additional Inscriptions

Additional inscriptions to memorials may be arranged by contacting a memorial mason, who will submit the application to The Council for approval. The memorial mason will require the plot number and the

Deed number before they can submit the application.

#### 5.7 Kerbing/edging

Kerbing/edging is NOT allowed to be erected around any plots within the cemetery, this includes wooden edging, plastic edging, metal or concrete edging. The Council reserve the right to remove any structures created around plots without notice.

#### 5.8 Maintenance of Memorials

The Deed owner is responsible for ensuring that the memorial is kept in a good state of repair and shall also be responsible for arranging the safe removal of the memorial to give access for re-opening of the plot should the need arise.

If the Council has to repair or make safe any memorial, for whatever reason including but not limited to lack of maintenance, inadequate installation or vandalism, it reserves the right to recover any costs incurred from the Deed owner.

#### 5.9 Removal of Memorials

It may be necessary for The Council to give permission to temporarily remove a memorial to allow excavations of an adjacent plot. The Council will endeavour to contact the Deed owner before such work commences but, if this proves impossible, the work will be authorised without advice to the Deed owner.

The costs in such circumstances will be borne by The Council.

## **6. Tributes – Floral and other**

#### 6.1 Planting of plots (burial and cremation)

Planting on or around plots is NOT permitted. The planting of trees and large shrubs is forbidden, and planting at the rear of headstones or to any side of cremation plots is not permitted due to its impact on neighbouring plots.

#### 6.2 Vases and other Plant Containers

Vases and plant containers may be placed on individual plot. Due to health and safety considerations, such containers MUST NOT be of breakable materials. In this context, "breakable materials" are construed as glass, china, ceramic, terracotta etc. When assessing the potential breakability of items, The Council will always take a more cautious approach.

Any containers etc construed as being “breakable” WILL be removed by staff and held at the Parish Council office. The Deed owner will be notified of its removal, and if the item has not been collected after a period of three months, it will (as appropriate) either be donated to a charity or destroyed.

In implementing this policy, The Council will not be held responsible for any loss or damage to items removed.

Other items that could cause problems for site maintenance such as stones, gravel or shells (which could get caught in or projected by mowing machinery) are NOT permitted and will be removed.

### 6.3 Tributes – Floral

Floral tributes left at the time of the funeral will be removed by staff after 21 days. The Council cannot be held responsible for the safety and upkeep of funeral floral tributes and items left at the plot.

Visitors are requested to remove any wreaths or flowers placed on a plot as soon as they become wilted, otherwise they will be removed by staff.

Following special occasions, floral tributes will be removed as follows:

Christmas—8 weeks after Christmas

Mothers’ day—4 weeks after Mothers’ Day

Easter—4 weeks after Easter

Fathers’ Day—4 weeks after Fathers’ Day

### 6.4 Tributes – Other

Items which may be considered as offensive or disruptive (wind chimes/lights for example) will be removed by the staff.

Solar and battery operated lights are not permitted.

The Deed owner will be notified of its removal, and if the item has not been collected from the Council office, after a period of three months, it will (as appropriate) either be donated to a charity or destroyed.

In implementing this policy, the Council will not be held responsible for any loss or damage to items removed.

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